

Sermon Series: Mind Revolution- Change Your Life

January 17, 2026

Opening Monologue

Welcome to the AVC APP, everyone! This is the Sermon and Commentary portion of the app. As you scroll down, you'll receive spiritual insights, commentary, and devotional questions tied to this week's sermon. Enjoy, and dive in as you grow more deeply equipped in God's Word.

This week, I'm starting a new sermon series called: "Mind Revolution" – Change Your Life. Let me be clear: This title is not some fancy hip-hop play on words. This title came through much prayer and direction by the Holy Spirit. I truly believe this series will change your life. I fully realize that I'm ministering to seasoned Christians and unseasoned Christians alike—but no matter where you are on your journey with Jesus, our minds can always use renewal.

Your brain is a 2.5 to 3 pound jelly-like powerhouse that controls 95 to 99% of your body's functions. Our brain is a dynamic, adaptable organ, constantly shaped and reshaped by every experience we've been through in life—whether really good or really bad. Our brains have lobes that store memories... I compare this to a storage unit where we store extra things from our homes—eventually, what's stored there comes back out... hmm!

We all remember hurtful words, tragic events, abuses, hardships, trials and tribulations, fears, doubts, chaos, turmoil, and all the other painful occurrences from our childhood to the present day. All of these life experiences create our worldview, where our beliefs, emotions, identity, thinking patterns, etc., are formed—and eventually come out of our mouths. Intertwined in all this is what the Bible calls strongholds being formed. Strongholds that are not dealt with will lead to bad habits, addictions, and sinful responses to life... This affects every relationship we have.

The good news of Jesus Christ is that the Lord has the ability to transform our minds and make them new, restored, and superior to the old. (Literally from the Greek “renewing”) In the weeks to come, we are going to unpack all of this and much more; may you come opened to the Holy Spirits work of renewal in your life and mind.

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Romans 12:2a

Join us this Sunday as we dive into the Lord’s Word so that we are better equipped to defeat the devil’s schemes.

In Christ,

Rev. Brad Standfest

To Listen to this week’s Sermon: “Week 2 Having the Mind of Christ Series” Go to the Sermon tab here in our APP or use the links to our website or YouTube Channel where you can also listen to our Sermons:

Web: <https://www.almontvineyardchurch.org/media>

You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/@almontvineyardchurch>

Key Sermon Text

Galatians 5:16-17 & 19-21

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%205%3A16-17%20&version=NIV....>
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%205%3A19-21&version=NIV>

Galatians 5:22-23

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%205%3A22-23&version=NIV>

Romans 12:2

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2012%3A2&version=NIV>

Proverbs 18:21a

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2018%3A21a&version=NIV>

Commentary, Spiritual Applications, and Theological Reflections

Motivation to Move Forward

We all come from vastly different life circumstances. Some of us had the privilege of growing up in a Christian home, surrounded by faith and biblical truth from an early age, while others have no prior knowledge of Christianity at all. This means we've all been brought up in unique ways—some with both parents providing stability and guidance, while others navigated blended families, single-parent homes, or even more challenging environments. Don't think for a moment that this doesn't impact your life in a significant way, for better or for worse. These early experiences shape our worldview, our beliefs, our emotional responses, and even the neural pathways in our brains, storing memories—both the good and the bad—in those four main lobes of the cerebral cortex: the frontal lobe (decision-making and personality), temporal lobe (personal events and knowledge), parietal lobe (sensory and spatial context), and occipital lobe (visual details).

Unfortunately, many of us have gone through the “school of hard knocks,” dealt a very bad hand in life. Hardships and trials have plagued our paths—hurtful words that echo in our minds, tragic events, abuses, doubts, fears, chaos, turmoil, and all sorts of painful occurrences from childhood to the present day. Some of you have been told outright that you'll never amount to anything, or worse. I realize for many, this is putting it mildly; your upbringings were harsher, more scarring. Here's the deal: You are where you are today, and you very well could be dealing with extreme pain from your past. I'm not downplaying that at all—it's very real, very sad, and it leaves deep imprints in your life and mind.

The reality is, we all have a choice—yes, you do have a choice moving forward. You can choose to stay stuck in the past, allowing those unfortunate circumstances to dictate your future, reinforcing negative patterns through repeated thoughts and habits. Or, you can choose to move forward and change the game in a much different way—actually, in a supernatural way, through the power of Jesus Christ in your life. Cry out to Him: “Lord, I need You to help me overcome all of my

obstacles, barriers, trials, tribulations, hardships, pain, and confusion. I need You to transform my life because I don't want to keep on the same path."

The Word of God declares this hope in John 3:16-17: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." Translation: Jesus came to save us and move our lives forward—not to leave us condemned in our pain, but to redeem and renew us. If you allow Jesus Christ to take you by the hand, He can do all things in your life, as Philippians 4:13 reminds us: "I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

The real and raw question is: Will you allow Him to? Will you surrender and say, "Jesus, I need You to transform me"?

This transformation ties directly into the Mind Revolution we are diving into; exploring—God's incredible design for our brains, built with neuroplasticity, the ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections throughout life. Science calls it neuroplasticity, but Scripture reveals it as divine renewal. In Romans 12:2, we're instructed: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." That Greek word for "renewing"—*anakainōsis*—means a complete renovation, making something fresh, new, and qualitatively superior to the old. It's not just patching up old wounds; it's a supernatural experience from Jesus Christ that breaks old patterns, heals emotional scars, and aligns our thinking with God's truth, even repairing damage from brain injuries or deep traumas through His power, prayer, and intentional effort.

Think of the encounter with the woman at the well in John 4:1-42—a famous story of someone severely banged up by this world. She was a Samaritan, hated and marginalized by society, with emotional scars and strongholds from multiple husbands and a current relationship that wasn't even legitimate. She probably carried deep shame, rejection, and fortified false beliefs about her worth. But what did Jesus do? He met her in her mess, revealed her story without condemnation, and offered her "living water" (John 4:14): "Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give

them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” This meant a fresh new start—a God who forgives and forgets our sins “as far as the east is from the west” (Psalm 103:12), wiping the slate clean and giving a new day, a new opportunity, free from the haunting past.

These past pains often form what the Bible calls strongholds in our minds—fortified arguments, lofty opinions, false beliefs, or thought patterns that resist God’s truth, including pride, fear, unbelief, lies from Satan, sinful mindsets, or anything exalting self above God. Our worldview impacts how many we have; some people battle more due to harsher upbringings, but we all have some or many. If left unchecked, they turn into habits, addictions, and sinful responses that affect every relationship we have. But praise God, we’re called to demolish them! As 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 declares: “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

We wage this spiritual warfare with divine weapons: the truth of Scripture (the sword of the Spirit), prayer, faith, and the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18). Our words play a huge role too—they can reinforce strongholds or demolish them. Proverbs 18:21 warns: “The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.” Speak life! As Ephesians 4:29 urges: “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

I want to encourage you: No matter where you’re at in life, choose to move forward. Stop allowing your past to haunt your current life and prevent you from the abundant life Jesus promises (John 10:10: “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”). Surrender those strongholds, let neuroplasticity and the Holy Spirit renew your mind, and watch God transform the pain into purpose. We would do ourselves well to deal with these strongholds, making every thought obedient to Christ. Through Him, your brain—that dynamic, adaptable

organ constantly shaped by experiences—can be scrubbed, reprogrammed, and made superior. (1, Rev. Standfest)

Mind Revolution: God's Perfect Design

God designed our brain to be perfectly recreatable—able to be renewed, restored, and even made superior to its previous state. Think about that... Our brains are one of the smallest organs, yet they control essentially everything in our bodies. Here is a short list of what our brains control.

Our lobes—the four main divisions of the cerebral cortex—store and process all of our memories from our entire life, including both the good and the bad. As we experience many trials and tribulations, hurts and pains, doubts and fears, abuses, and all sorts of tragic events, these memories get wired in through strengthened neural connections.

To help you picture this clearly: The frontal lobe sits right behind your forehead and handles executive functions like decision-making, planning, personality, and organizing/retrieving memories—it shapes how we judge and respond to past experiences. The temporal lobe, located on the sides of your head near the ears, is critical for forming and storing personal event memories (episodic) and general knowledge (semantic), with the hippocampus deep inside playing a key role in encoding new memories. The parietal lobe, at the top of your head, processes sensory information, spatial awareness, and the contextual details of memories (like “where” and “how” things happened). Finally, the occipital lobe, at the very back, handles visual processing and stores the visual elements of memories—scenes, faces, colors, and images.

But to think that God made our minds able to be scrubbed and reprogrammed is utterly amazing. Science calls this neuroplasticity—the brain's incredible ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections throughout life, even after injury or trauma.

Neuroplasticity allows pathways to strengthen, new connections to form, and unused ones to be pruned, adapting the brain based on what we focus on, practice, and experience.

This means that if you have experienced brain damage, your mind can

literally be retrained to do even the simplest things you may have lost control of. For example, let's say you had an accident or a health crisis that caused you to lose mobility in your right arm. God's design in the brain made it possible that, through consistent physical therapy and of course prayer, your arm can be restored as the brain rewires and compensates for the damage.

This also means that emotional damage of any sort that has been caused to us can be repairable as well... What a supernatural, perfect creation!

This divine design aligns perfectly with Scripture. Romans 12:2 declares: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." The Greek word for "renewing" here is *anakainōsis*—meaning a complete renovation, a qualitative making fresh and new, a superior transformation to something better than before. It's not just a patch-up; it's God-powered renewal that makes the mind qualitatively superior through the work of the Holy Spirit and our cooperation.

This supernatural experience from Jesus Christ allows true transformation—breaking old patterns, healing wounds, and aligning our thinking with God's truth. Our words play a huge role in this process too. Proverbs 18:21 says, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit." Our spoken words have real power—they can build up or tear down, bring healing or harm, and deeply affect our own hearts, memories, and relationships. They shape the very neural pathways we reinforce!

Other verses echo this truth: Ephesians 4:29 urges, "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." And James 3 reminds us how the tongue, though small, can set a great fire—either destructive or life-giving.

God's design in our 3-pound jelly-like brain isn't static—it's built for ongoing renewal through neuroplasticity, empowered by His Spirit, Scripture, prayer, and life-giving words. This is the heart of the Mind Revolution—Jesus Christ can supernaturally transform what science shows is already adaptable. Praise Him for fearfully and wonderfully making us (Psalm 139:14)! (1, Rev. Standfest)

Core Components of a Worldview

1. Beliefs & Assumptions

- What we hold to be true (about God, self, others, reality)
- Often subconscious
- Filters how we interpret everything

“As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.” (Prov. 23:7)

2. Reasoning

- How we process information
- Logic, interpretation, conclusions
- Influenced by truth, bias, or deception

3. Thinking Patterns

- Habitual thought loops
- Renewed or unrenewed mind (Rom. 12:2)
- Includes rumination, fear-based thinking, faith-based thinking

4. Perception

- How we see situations and people
- Interpretation of events (not just the events themselves)
- Example: threat vs. opportunity

5. Values

- What we consider important or worth pursuing
- Drives priorities and decisions
- Shapes moral judgments

6. Emotions

- Internal responses to thoughts and beliefs
- Not separate from worldview — they flow from it
- Examples: peace, fear, anger, compassion

7. Attitudes

- Settled outlook or posture toward life
- Hopeful, cynical, grateful, defensive, humble

8. Responses

- Immediate reactions (verbal or internal)
- Often automatic, revealing underlying beliefs

9. Choices & Decisions

- Conscious decisions over time
- Where belief becomes behavior

10. Actions & Behaviors

- Outward expression of worldview
- What others can observe

“By their fruit you will recognize them.” (Matt. 7:16)

11. Language & Speech

- Words reveal inner framework (Luke 6:45)
- Tone, content, and patterns of speech

12. Conscience

- Sense of right and wrong
- Can be trained, ignored, hardened, or renewed

13. Identity

- How we see ourselves (in Christ vs. in the world)
- Drives confidence, fear, and obedience

14. Habits & Practices

- Repeated behaviors that reinforce worldview
 - Spiritual disciplines or destructive patterns
-

How Core Worldviews and Beliefs Form Strongholds

The Bible speaks powerfully about strongholds in our minds, especially in the New Testament, where we're called to actively demolish them through spiritual warfare.

The key passage is 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

Here, the Greek word for “strongholds” is *ochyrōma*(ὄχυρωμα), a military term meaning a fortified fortress, a heavily defended structure, or a prison-like stronghold. In this context, Paul uses it metaphorically for mental and spiritual fortifications—deeply entrenched thought patterns, false beliefs, lofty opinions, or arguments that resist God’s truth and exalt human reasoning above divine knowledge.

These strongholds aren’t just random bad thoughts; they’re fortified over time, often becoming resistant to change. They include pride, fear, unbelief, lies from Satan, sinful mindsets, or anything that places self above God’s truth. Paul emphasizes that our weapons are divine (not carnal or worldly)—things like the truth of Scripture, prayer, faith, and the full armor of God (as described in Ephesians 6:10-18)—and they have real power to demolish these fortresses.

Our **worldview**—the foundational lens through which we interpret reality, formed by experiences, culture, upbringing, traumas, and influences—directly shapes the strongholds in our minds. A worldly worldview (conforming to “the pattern of this world,” as in Romans 12:2) allows deceptive beliefs to take root and become fortified. These core beliefs act like the “building blocks” of strongholds: repeated exposure, agreement, and reinforcement strengthen neural pathways (tying back to neuroplasticity), making the patterns habitual and hard to break.

Here are some common examples of how core worldly beliefs form mental strongholds, often leading to habits, addictions, and relational damage:

- **Pride / Self-Sufficiency:** A core belief like “I must rely on myself because no one else will” or “I’m better/smarter than others” (rooted in worldly independence or achievement culture) builds a stronghold of arrogance. It exalts self above God, resists humility, and leads to stubbornness, judgmentalism, broken relationships, and isolation. Scripture warns that “pride goes before destruction” (Proverbs 16:18), and this mindset opposes the knowledge of God.

- **Fear / Anxiety:** Beliefs such as “The world is unsafe and

uncontrollable” or “I can’t trust God to protect me” (often from past hurts, trauma, or a secular view of chaos without divine sovereignty) create a stronghold of torment. It manifests in worry, phobias, avoidance, or control issues, paralyzing faith and obedience. Fear elevates circumstances above God’s promises, as Jesus confronted in the disciples (Matthew 8:26).

- **Unbelief / Doubt:** A worldview that says “God isn’t real/reliable in my life” or “Miracles and answered prayer are for others, not me” (influenced by skepticism, disappointment, or scientific materialism) fortifies unbelief. This stronghold blocks intimacy with God, leads to spiritual apathy, and can spiral into rebellion or idolatry (seeking security elsewhere).

- **Lies from Satan / Deception:** Core beliefs like “I’m worthless/unlovable” (from rejection/abuse), “Sin will satisfy me” (worldly pleasure-seeking), or “God is holding out on me” (echoing the serpent in Genesis 3) build strongholds of shame, addiction, bitterness, or unforgiveness. These resist God’s truth about our identity in Christ and give the enemy a foothold (Ephesians 4:27).

Everyone has some strongholds—more for those shaped by heavy trauma, lies, or prolonged worldly influence—but we all carry them to varying degrees. These entrenched patterns turn into habits/addictions (e.g., anger outbursts, escapism, people-pleasing) and ripple into every relationship, creating conflict, division, or distance.

The good news? We’re not helpless! Believers are called to wage spiritual warfare using divine weapons: immerse in Scripture (the sword of the Spirit), persistent prayer, faith, community accountability, and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. We actively demolish these by identifying false arguments, taking every thought captive, and making it obedient to Christ. This process aligns with Romans 12:2—being transformed by the renewing (anakainōsis: a complete, superior renovation) of our minds.

Our worldview impacts how many strongholds we battle, but praise God—through Jesus Christ, we can deal with them! By bringing every thought into obedience to Him, we break cycles, heal relationships,

and experience true freedom. (LABC,1)

Romans 12:2

Resisting conformity to the world and embracing the transformation that comes in Jesus Christ

Do not be conformed to this world: This warns us that the “world system”—the popular culture and manner of thinking that is in rebellion against God—will try to conform us to its ungodly pattern, and that process must be resisted.

But be transformed by the renewing of your mind: This is the opposite of being conformed to this world. The battle ground between conforming to the world and being transformed is within the mind of the believer. Christians must think differently.

“I don’t want to be conformed to this world. I want to be transformed. How do I do it?” By the renewing of your mind. The problem with many Christians is they live life based on feelings, or they are only concerned about doing.

The life based on feeling says, “How do I feel today? How do I feel about my job? How do I feel about my wife? How do I feel about worship? How do I feel about the preacher?” This life by feeling will never know the transforming power of God, because it ignores the renewing of the mind.

The life based on doing says, “Don’t give me your theology. Just tell me what to do. Give me the four points for this and the seven keys for that.” This life of doing will never know the transforming power of God, because it ignores the renewing of the mind.

God is never against the principles of feeling and doing. He is a God of powerful and passionate feeling and He commands us to be doers. Yet feelings and doing are completely insufficient foundations for the Christian life. The first questions cannot be “How do I feel?” or “What do I do?” Rather, they must be “What is true here? What does God’s Word say?”

Transformed: This is the ancient Greek word metamorphoo—describing a metamorphosis. The same word is used to describe Jesus

in His transfiguration (Mark 9:2–3). This is a glorious transformation!

The only other place Paul uses this word for transformed is in 2 Corinthians 3:18: But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. For Paul, this transformation and renewing of our minds takes place as we behold the face of God, spending time in His glory.

Prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God: As we are transformed on the inside, the proof is evident on the outside, as others can see what the good and acceptable and perfect will of God is through our life.

Paul here explains how to live out the will of God:

- Keep in mind the rich mercy of God to you—past, present, and future (by the mercies of God)
- As an act of intelligent worship, decide to yield your entire self to Him (present your bodies a living sacrifice)
- Resist conformity to the thoughts and actions of this world (do not be conformed)
- By focus on God's word and fellowship with Him (be transformed by the renewing of your mind)

Then, your life will be in the will of God. Your life will prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

You may know what the good and acceptable and perfect will of God is, but you can't prove it in your life apart from the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world.

When believers offer their entire self to God, a change will happen in their relation to the world. Christians are called to a different life-style than what the world offers with its behavior and customs, which are usually selfish and often corrupting (Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:14). Christians are to live as citizens of a future world. There will be pressure to conform, to continue living according to the script written by the world, but believers are forbidden to give in to that pressure.

Many Christians wisely decide that much worldly behavior is off limits

for them. After all, it is not our objective to find out just how much like the world we can become yet still maintain our distinctives. But refusing to conform to this world's values must go even deeper than the level of behavior and customs—it must be firmly planted in our minds—be transformed by the renewing of your minds. The Greek word for “transformed” (metamorphousthe) is the root for the English word metamorphosis. Believers are to experience a complete transformation from the inside out. And the change must begin in the mind, where all thoughts and actions begin. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:22–24). One of the keys, then, to the Christian life is to be involved in activities that renew the mind. Renewing (anakainosei) refers to a new way of thinking, a mind desiring to be conformed to God rather than to the world. We will never be truly transformed without this renewing of our mind.

Much of the work is done by God's Spirit in us, and the tool most frequently used is God's Word. The Bible claims the ability to judge “the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12 NIV). As we memorize and meditate upon God's Word, our way of thinking changes. Our minds become first informed, and then conformed to the pattern of God, the pattern for which we were originally designed.

DO NOT CONFORM

What causes us to conform to the world's pattern?

- We believe that the world is more likely to allow us pleasure than God is.
- We find a certain exhilaration in rushing along with the world.
- We are afraid of what might happen if we really think about life and change.
- We are crippled by pride or a negative self-image and believe there really isn't an alternative.
- We reject the life of service and humility necessary to conform ourselves to God's pattern.

Conforming to the world's pattern will involve the following ways of thinking:

- We have a right to have all our desires fulfilled (see Romans 8:5, 1 Peter 4:3–4).
- We have a right to pursue and use power (see Mark 10:42–45).
- We have a right to abuse people (see Luke 11:43, 46–52).
- We have a right to accumulate wealth for purely selfish reasons (see Matthew 16:26).
- We have a right to use personal abilities and wisdom for self-advancement rather than for serving others (see 1 Corinthians 3:19).
- We have a right to ignore or even hate God (see James 4:4).

Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is.

When believers have had their minds transformed and are becoming more like Christ, they will want God's will, and not their own will, for their lives. And only as they are being transformed will they be able to know, do, and enjoy what God desires for them. Knowing God's will isn't always easy, and even less so when it is not defined in every aspect by a set of laws and regulations. But it is possible if we willingly submit to and depend on God. Only then can we know it; only then can we begin the even more difficult task of doing it.

His good, pleasing and perfect will. In the Greek text the three adjectives good, pleasing, and perfect are used as substantives (nouns). God's will is what is good, what is pleasing (to God), and what is perfect for each believer. Believers who are being transformed, who know and do God's will, also discover that what God plans for them is good, pleasing to God, and perfect for them.

5:17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature.

They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. While believers live in this world, they face constant tension between their sinful human desires and their new spiritual life. These two are in conflict with each other. We must not infer from Paul's words that our personality has two selves, nor that we have two equal and opposite forces struggling to gain control. In Christ and in the Holy Spirit, we have a victorious new resurrection life. The Holy Spirit in us guarantees our future total redemption and change. *Sarx*, translated as "sinful nature," gives that impression. However, it is better to

understand it as “sinful human desires.” Though we have new life in Christ, we still have a mind and body prone to rebel and enticed by sinful desires. We must resist those desires.

Paul expands upon this conflict in other letters; for example:

- For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.... But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. (Romans 8:5, 9 nrsv)

(Read all of Romans 8:5–9, 12–17; Ephesians 4:21–24; and Colossians 3:3–15.) The conflict described in Romans 8 and in Galatians 5 differs from the conflict described in Romans 7:7–25. In Romans 7, Paul described how the power of indwelling sin keeps the person under the law from doing what the law requires. He did not mention the Spirit until later in the letter.

We shouldn’t be surprised that the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit. We often experience resistance when we follow the Spirit’s leading. Satan serves as a persistent teacher of rebellion, and humanity has had centuries of practice. Whatever path we choose, we will hear the whispers of opposition. Whenever we set out to do what the Holy Spirit instructs, we can expect the flesh to flare up in opposition. When we decide to share the gospel, our sinful human nature will make us feel foolish. When we decide to commit ourselves to some service, the flesh hinders us with evil desires. The flesh relentlessly tries to thwart the leading of the Spirit.

The greatest of all evils is not to be tempted, because there are then grounds for believing that the devil looks upon us as his property.
John Vianney

HOW TO DEAL WITH THE SINFUL NATURE

- Admit that you do have a selfish, sinful human nature. Jeremiah put it well, “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9 niv). Don’t be shocked by your

tendency to selfishness.

- Surrender your selfish nature, with all its tendencies, to Christ (see also notes on 5:24). Ask God to do whatever it takes in your life to bring you to say, with Paul, “I have been crucified with Christ” (2:20).
- Commit your actions, thoughts, passions, and capabilities to Christ. Jesus described this ongoing, daily action as “denying self” (see Luke 9:23–25). Knowing that your sinful nature desires to hinder the Spirit, ask the Spirit to help you deny those desires.
- Make service to others a top priority for your life. The Bible even speaks of this process as training in holiness (see 1 Timothy 4:7). Loving and serving others helps restrain our selfish desires.

Conversely, each time we follow our sinful human nature, we will receive (through our consciences, God’s Word, or even other believers) reminders not to follow those sinful desires.

RESIST!

Our resource for resisting “the desires of the sinful nature” is the Holy Spirit. We can ask God to expose and help us contradict our sinful desires. Remember, these desires include more than sexual desires. In fact, in Galatians, Paul was responding to debates about the law, not sexual immorality. Christians were enflamed with anger against those on the other side.

Because of who we are, depending on the Spirit’s help becomes essential. He can be the warning signal that alerts us that we have gone against or are about to violate the Father’s will. The world will encourage us to “listen to our hearts” or will try to drown out the Spirit’s guidance with other sounds—but we will receive dependable guidance by listening carefully to him.

True believers realize the deadly power of sin. No longer their master, sin now attacks like a powerful enemy. Sinful desires still pop up, like guerrilla forces, attacking us when we least expect it. And when we attempt to follow the Spirit’s desires, we find the attacks growing in intensity, indeed they “war against [the] soul” (1 Peter 2:11 niv). In other words, having wrong desires doesn’t always mean we have sin in our life. If we are in tune with the Holy Spirit, sinful human desires will attempt to block his leading.

Because of this conflict, believers do not do what [they] want. This phrase has one of three possible meanings: (1) The sinful nature keeps believers from doing the good that the Spirit desires; (2) the Spirit keeps believers from doing the evil that their sinful nature desires; or (3) the sinful nature and the Spirit work against each other, hindering each's desires. The third explanation seems likely. If we function normally, our desires and the Spirit will counter each other's moves. So we must realize this warfare, claim the Spirit's victory, focus on Christ's help, and rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. What does our sinful nature desire? And what does the Holy Spirit desire? Paul will answer these questions in the following verses.

ONLY THROUGH HIM

Paul describes the two forces conflicting within us—the Holy Spirit and the sinful nature (our evil desires or inclinations that stem from our bodies; see also 5:16, 19, 24). Paul is not saying that these forces are equal—the Holy Spirit is infinitely stronger. But having a superior ally doesn't help us if we refuse to depend on him. If we rely on our own wisdom and strength, we will make wrong choices and take the wrong actions. If we try to follow the Spirit by our own human effort, we will fail. Our only way to freedom from our evil desires is through the empowering of the Holy Spirit (see Romans 8:9; Ephesians 4:23–24; Colossians 3:3–8).

5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Some might have wondered if Paul was moving into a form of legalism all his own. So he reiterated that believers are not under the law. Yet freedom from the law does not imply freedom to do whatever one pleases (5:13). Neither do we live in the Spirit in some sort of “middle ground.” Instead, we live on another plane altogether—we have truth as opposed to falsehood; we have grace as opposed to works; we act out of love as opposed to keeping laws; we are supervised by the Spirit as opposed to being supervised by the law.

So what does a Christian do? How does a Christian live? The “works” of Christianity come from the Spirit indwelling the believer. The Christian is led by the Spirit. But the Christian must make up his or her mind to follow where the Spirit leads, especially when the sinful nature constantly rebels, in order to do the acts described in the next three verses. For more on the Holy Spirit's leading, see 5:16 and 5:25.

HOUSE RULES

When Paul says that those under control of the Spirit are not under control of the law, he's talking about accountability for Christians. Paul does not invalidate the law; he only states that the law is no longer in charge—the Holy Spirit takes control.

Most parents establish certain house rules when raising their children. These “laws” cover such things as who gets in the house when Mom and Dad are away, where kids can and can't go without having specific permission, additional responsibilities when a parent is not present. But when parents are there, the “laws” take on a secondary function. Mom and Dad still have the rules, but they supervise personally. The Holy Spirit's presence means that we are free from having to worry about measuring up to the law; now we have the freedom to even go well beyond the law because we have a direct link with the Holy Spirit himself.

5:19-21 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious. Paul contrasted the works of our sinful human desires and the works of the Spirit-filled life in 5:19-21 and 5:22-23. Paul's use of the word obvious (phanera—self-evident, manifest) probably did not mean readily visible, for some of the sins listed are private (although may well manifest themselves at some point—as with hatred or jealousy). Instead, the word means that these sins obviously come directly from sinful human desires. In other words, once the behavior has been identified, we know its source.

DENIAL

We use the term denial to describe the all-too-frequent habit people have of overlooking problems in their lives, refusing to accept responsibility, and neglecting to take required action. Denial fits well with Paul's warning that acts of the flesh are clearly identifiable. Denial does not mean the inability to see something wrong; rather, it means the unwillingness to see what is wrong. Denial must be overcome before we can repent. The psalmist's prayer can help us be honest in our relationship with God: “Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great

transgression” (Psalm 19:12–13 niv).

Paul’s list of sins falls into four categories. These particular sins were especially prevalent in the pagan world, and the Galatians would have readily understood them. With few exceptions, we recognize these sins as present in our own time as well. (The following word list is quoted from niv.)

In the first category three sexual sins are mentioned:

Sexual immorality (porneia—fornication)—Any form of illicit sexual relationship. The term serves to spotlight forbidden sexual behavior between people or indirect participation as an audience. We derive our term pornography from this Greek word.

Impurity (akatharsia)—Moral uncleanness. Perhaps no sexual act has taken place, but the person exhibits a crudeness or insensitivity in sexual matters that offends others and leads them to false conclusions about the other person’s character. An example today would be the excessive use of sexual humor (or what is supposed to be humor), where people make statements with a sexual double meaning.

Debauchery (aselgeia—licentiousness)—Open and excessive indulgence in sexual sins. The person has no sense of shame or restraint. Debauchery is the outworking of sexual immorality and impurity.

The next two sins are religious sins particular to pagan culture:

Idolatry (eidololatria)—Worship of pagan idols. A person creates substitutes for God and then treats them as if they were God. This person is giving in to sinful human desires.

Witchcraft (pharmakeia)—Involvement with the powers of evil, at times using potions and poisons. With idolatry, a person acts in a submissive role in relation to evil; with witchcraft, the person is an active agent who manipulates the powers of evil.

The next eight sins pertain to conduct toward people (inter-personal relations) that has been motivated by sinful

desires:

Hatred (echthrai)—A condition of fixed enmity between groups. This may be real, unresolved conflict whose cause has been forgotten but which has yielded a harvest of bitterness toward one another.

Discord (eris)—Competition, rivalry, bitter conflict—the seeds and the natural fruit of hatred.

Jealousy (zelos)—A feeling of resentment that someone else has what another feels he or she deserves. The negative aspect of jealousy depends on its context. This word has also become the English word zeal. Earlier, Paul used the verb forms three times, referring to two forms of zeal—one negative, one positive (4:17–18). Zeal, then, intensifies any of the other characteristics in this list.

Fits of rage (thumoi)—Outbursts of anger for selfish reasons. The plural form conveys the meaning of continual and uncontrolled behavior.

Selfish ambition (eritheiai)—The approach to life and work that tries to get ahead at other people's expense. Not only might this refer to what we call "workaholism," it also implies a mercenary, aggressive attitude toward others in the pursuit of one's goals.

Dissensions (dichostasiai)—Strong disagreements or quarrels. The attitude that can quickly develop between people when a disagreeable attitude prevails. Whatever the topic or issue, as soon as one side states its opinion, the other party immediately champions the opposing view, as a matter of "principle."

Factions (haireseis)—Divisions created among people because of dissensions. This describes the tendency to look for allies in conflict, to form power blocks. The almost spontaneous generation of cliques demonstrates this characteristic of sinful human desires.

VICES AND VIRTUES

The Bible mentions many specific actions and attitudes that are either right or wrong. Look at the list included here. Are there a number of characteristics from the wrong column that are influencing you?

VICES

Neglecting God and others

Sexual Immorality (Galatians 5:19)

Impurity (Galatians 5:19)

Lust (Colossians 3:5)

Hatred (Galatians 5:20)

Discord (Galatians 5:20)

Jealousy (Galatians 5:20)

Anger (Galatians 5:20)

Selfish Ambition (Galatians 5:20)

Dissension (Galatians 5:20)

Arrogance (2 Corinthians 12:20)

Envy (Galatians 5:21)

Murder (Revelation 22:12–16)

Idolatry (Galatians 5:20; Ephesians 5:5)

Witchcraft (Galatians 5:20)

Drunkenness (Galatians 5:21)

Wild Living (Luke 15:13; Galatians 5:21)

Cheating (1 Corinthians 6:8)

Adultery (1 Corinthians 6:9–10)

Homosexuality (1 Corinthians 6:9–10)

Greed (1 Corinthians 6:9–10; Ephesians 5:5)

Stealing (1 Corinthians 6:9–10)

Lying (Revelation 22:12–16)

VIRTUES

The by-products of living for God

Love (Galatians 5:22)

Joy (Galatians 5:22)

Peace (Galatians 5:22)

Patience (Galatians 5:22)

Kindness (Galatians 5:22)

Goodness (Galatians 5:22)

Faithfulness (Galatians 5:22)

Gentleness (Galatians 5:23)

Self-control (Galatians 5:23)

Envy (phthonoi)—A desire to possess something awarded to or achieved by another. Or even the twisted logic that cries “Unfair!” about another’s circumstances and expresses the wish, If I can’t have

that, they shouldn't get it either! It's sad to note, but many of these social sins are often seen in our churches today.

Finally Paul lists two sins, common to pagan cultures, that are often connected with the rituals of idol worship:

Drunkenness (methai)—Excessive use of wine and strong drink. Later Paul used this tendency to highlight the contrast between living by the flesh and living by the Spirit: "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18 niv).

Orgies (komoi)—Drunken, carousing "parties," often filled with sexual promiscuity, were associated with festivals of some pagan gods. The feasts in honor of Bacchus were particularly infamous for their immorality.

And the like—Paul added an "etc." to show that the list was by no means complete.

FAMILY FEUDS

In the life of almost any local church one will find evidence of how sinful desires have affected relationships. Lasting feuds go on between certain families or groups. The hostility exists under a thin cover of civility, but from time to time it erupts. Often those directly involved may have inherited the feud from others (grandparents, family friends, former members, etc.). They no longer even understand why they feel the way they do toward that group or family, but the feelings run deep.

Because sinful human desires work so powerfully, we need the Holy Spirit's help. The conflict exists because it continues to be fed by both sides. If repentance and the laying down of weapons happens on both sides, they can agree to peace. Such healing may open the way for a remarkable new receptivity to the gospel in that community.

I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul repeated his warning. The phrase as I did before enlightens us, for it reveals that while Paul was spreading the gospel to Gentile congregations across the Roman Empire, he was applying the gospel to morality. He gave his listeners certain

guidelines to follow as “standard Christian behavior.” The freedom he preached was not a moral wilderness of “easy believism” but a guided tour of life under the influence of God’s Spirit.

Those who live like this will not inherit refers to the lifestyle of people who habitually exhibit these characteristics. This does not mean that believers who lapse into any of these sins will lose their salvation. People who habitually exhibit these characteristics reveal themselves to be enslaved to sinful human desires. They are not children of God; thus, they cannot have any part in the inheritance. The priceless gift had been offered, but they had refused to receive it. The gift had not been withheld from them; they simply had withheld themselves from the gift (see also 1 Corinthians 6:9–10; Ephesians 5:5). People who have accepted Christ and have the Holy Spirit within them will manifest that new life by making a clean break with such sins as listed above.

The kingdom of God has two aspects: (1) its presence in human hearts at conversion, and (2) its future coming at the end of the age. Paul was most likely thinking of the future kingdom promised to all believers. However, as long as a person insists on the habits of the flesh, he or she will not experience even those aspects of the kingdom of God that are possible in this life.

MAKE A BREAK

We all have evil desires, and we can’t ignore them. In order for us to follow the Holy Spirit’s guidance, we must deal with them decisively (see 5:24). These desires include obvious sins such as sexual immorality and witchcraft. They also include less obvious sins such as selfish ambition, hatred, and jealousy. Those who ignore such sins or refuse to deal with them reveal that they have not received the gift of the Spirit that leads to a transformed life.

5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is ... Paul’s introduction of the word fruit is filled with meaning. While we might have expected him to say, “The works of the Spirit are,” Paul needed to use a fresh term. He had used “works” enough throughout this letter. Besides, “works” indicates lots of activities that people must do. “Fruit,” however, is singular, indicating that all the fruits exist as a unit (like a bunch of grapes rather than many different pieces of fruit) and that all are

important to all believers (unlike “gifts” that are dispensed differently to different people). So Paul conveyed the meaning of a full harvest of virtues. Also, “fruit” is a by-product; it takes time to grow and requires care and cultivation. The Spirit produces the fruit; our job is to get in tune with the Spirit. Believers exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, not because they work at it, but simply because they are filled with the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit separates Christians from a godless, evil world, reveals a power within them, and helps them become more Christlike in their daily lives. In contrast to the list it follows, Paul did not describe these characteristics as obvious. The previous ones reside in us; the following ones come as a result of the Spirit’s presence.

Again, the characteristics fall into categories. The first three are inward and can come from God alone:

Love (agape)—Love as shown by Jesus, whose love is self-sacrificing and unchanging, and as demonstrated by God who sent his Son for sinners (Romans 5:5). Love forms the foundation for all the other fruit listed. Elsewhere, Paul breaks love itself down into various components (see 1 Corinthians 13), so that “love” turns out to bear little resemblance to the emotional meaning so often given to the word.

Joy (chara)—An inner rejoicing that abides despite outer circumstances. This characteristic has little to do with happiness and can exist in times of unhappiness. It is a deep and nourishing satisfaction that continues even when a life situation seems empty and unsatisfying. The relationship with God through Christ remains even in the deserts and valleys of living.

Peace (eirene)—An inner quietness and trust in God’s sovereignty and justice, even in the face of adverse circumstances. This is a profound agreement with the truth that God, not we, remains in charge of the universe.

The next three concern each believer’s relationships with others:

Longsuffering (makrothumia)—Patiently putting up with people who continually irritate us. The Holy Spirit’s work in us increases our endurance.

Kindness (chrestotes)—Acting charitably, benevolently toward others, as God did toward us. Kindness takes the initiative in responding to

other people's needs.

Goodness (agathosune)—Reaching out to do good to others, even if they don't deserve it. Goodness does not react to evil but absorbs the offense and responds with positive action.

FRUITFULNESS

The fruit of the Spirit is the spontaneous work of the Holy Spirit in us. The Spirit produces these character traits that are found in the nature of Christ. They are the by-products of Christ's control; we can't obtain them by trying to get them without his help. If we want the fruit of the Spirit to grow in us, we must join our lives to his (see John 15:4-5). We must know him, love him, remember him, and imitate him. As a result, we will fulfill the intended purpose of the law: to love God and our neighbors. Which of these qualities do you want the Spirit to produce in you?

The last three fruit present more general character traits that ought to guide a believer's life:

Faithfulness (pistis)—Reliable, trustworthy.

Gentleness (prautes)—Humble, considerate of others, submissive to God and his Word. Even when anger is the appropriate response, as when Jesus cleared the temple, gentleness keeps the expression of anger headed in the right direction. Gentleness applies even force in the correct way.

Self-control (egkrateia)—Mastery over sinful human desires and their lack of restraint. Ironically, our sinful desires, which promise self-fulfillment and power, inevitably lead us to slavery. When we surrender to the Holy Spirit, initially we feel as though we have lost control, but he leads us to the exercise of self-control that would be impossible in our own strength.

Against such there is no law. God gave the law to make people aware of their sin and to restrain evil. But no one would make a law against these fruit (virtues), for they are neither sinful nor evil. Indeed, a society where all people acted thus would need very few laws at all. Because God who sent the law also sent the Spirit, the by-products of the Spirit-filled life harmonize perfectly with the intent of God's law. A person who exhibits the fruit of the Spirit fulfills the law far better than

a person who observes the rituals but has little love in his or her heart.

Resources: Rev. Brad Standfest (1), Logos Bible Program, Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, Guzik, David. 2013. Romans. David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible, Barton, Bruce B., David Veerman, and Neil S. Wilson. 1992. Romans. Life Application Bible Commentary, Barton, Bruce B., and Philip Wesley Comfort. 1995. Philippians, Colossians, Philemon. Life Application Bible Commentary. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers. Barton, Bruce B., David Veerman, and Neil S. Wilson. 1992. Romans. Life Application Bible Commentary. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers. Guzik, David. 2013. Romans. David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible. Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik. Barton, Bruce B. 1994. Galatians. Life Application Bible Commentary. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, The Complaining Cure- Author and Pastor Bill Wahl, Good and Angry- Dr. David Powlison, Stop Your Complaining- Author and Pastor Ronnie Martin.

Sermon Notes:

Mind Revolution - Change Your Life

Good Morning Everyone... It's Good to be in the House of the Lord with you all...

Welcome to our Online Family & Friends...

Today I am starting a New Series Called: Mind Revolution - Change Your Life

Understand... This Title... Mind Revolution... Change Your Life... Is not some Fancy Hip Hop Words or Title...

This Title was Directed by the Holy Spirit and I literally Believe Jesus will Change Your Life (If you Allow)

Before we hop into God's Word let me quickly give you the AVC Connections... YouTube, App, Facebook/ Website

[Let's Pray]

What is a Revolution?

At its core a revolution is a sudden, radical, or complete change, often

involving the overthrow of an old system and establishing something new.

As this pertains to this Sermon Series a Mind Revolution is about overthrowing your negative thoughts and making them obedient to Jesus Christ. It's about the radical renewal of your minds and eliminating any form of strongholds.

Today I am going to Lay the Foundation to our Series...

Let me share some Brain Facts with you...

PP) Picture of Brain Lifting a Weight

Your Brain is a 2.5-3lb Jelly like Powerhouse... That Controls 95-99% of your Bodies Functions...

The Brain is not a Fixed Unchangeable Machine... Your Brain is a Dynamic adaptable organ being constantly Shaped and Reshaped by every Experience, Thought, Emotion, Habit and Intentional effort across your entire life.

Whether we like it or not... The Good, Bad and Ugly from your whole life is Stored up here ...

This is why I can remember a Nightmare I had when I was 10 years old...

This is why I can remember the Bait I used and Depth for every Trophy Fish I have caught... And the Location

Listen Carefully: This is why we all remember Hurtful Words, Tragic events, Abuses, Hardships, Trials & Tribulations, Fears, Doubts, Chaos & Turmoil and all other Painful Occurrences from your Childhood to the Present Day...

No... You're Not in a Psychiatrists Office...

PP) Listen... You must know and understand the Truth... So the Truth (Jesus) Can set you Free... Change Your Life
All of the Good, Bad & Ugly gets stored in the Lobes of Your Brain...
(Storage Rental)

In our Storage Unit (Brain) we Create our Worldview...

PP) Our Worldview Holds ALL of this: Beliefs/Assumptions,

Reasoning, Thinking Patterns, Emotions, Attitude/Actions,
Communication & Responses, Choices & Decisions, Language &
Speech, Identity, Habits & Practices

The Good is Good... But the Bad Manifests itself into what is Biblically called Strongholds...

I want to Read one of the Best Biblical Examples of this in the N.T.

Read Galatians 5:16-17 & 19-21

When the Strongholds get Attached to our lives... It Damages Us & Others...

Strongholds that are not dealt with lead to- Bad Habits, Addictions & Sinful Responses to Life... - This affects every Relationship that you have

The Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is... Our Brains Can be Changed & Transformed...

Science calls the Reshaping of the Brain Neuroplasticity... I call it Jesus... JESUS

Our Main Passage in our Series is... Romans 12:2

PP) Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

PP) The Word Transform in Greek is “Metamorphoo”

(Metamorphosis) means to change form. An Internal fundamental change that affects the entire being.

PP) The Word Renewing Literally Means: Fresh & New...

Superior then the Old

“This Renewal & Transformation involves a shift from Old Patterns of thoughts influenced by the world to a mindset that reflects Gods Wisdom and purposes. It's about continually allowing Gods Word and Spirit to reshape your perspective. Leading to a life filled with the Fruits of the Spirit.” (1)

As we launch into our Series we will see and understand that our Words Matter...

Solomon says in Proverbs 18:21a: The tongue has the power of Life & death...

As we press Forward my Goal is for you to obtain the Fruits of the Spirit in your Lives

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Closing Prayer

Devotional Questions

1. Identifying the Battle Within

Read Galatians 5:16-17. What specific “desires of the flesh” (such as fear, shame, anger, or addiction rooted in past hurts) do you sense conflicting with the Spirit’s leading in your life right now? How have these desires formed strongholds that keep you stuck in old patterns? Pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal hidden conflicts and give you courage to name them.

2. Taking Thoughts Captive

Reflect on 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. What “arguments” or “pretensions” (false beliefs like “I’m worthless,” “I’ll never change,” or “God has forgotten me”) have built fortified strongholds in your mind from past experiences? Write down one or two specific thoughts that oppose God’s truth. How can you actively “take them captive” today and make them obedient to Christ through prayer and Scripture?

3. Choosing Renewal Over Conformity

In Romans 12:2, Paul commands us not to conform to the world’s pattern but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. Which worldly patterns (negative self-talk, bitterness, or self-sufficiency) from your past have shaped your current thinking? What would it look like practically to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in a “complete renovation”

(anakainōsis) of those areas? Ask God for one small step of obedience this week.

4. Replacing Death with Life in Your Words

Proverbs 18:21 declares that “the tongue has the power of life and death.” How have your own words (spoken or internal) reinforced strongholds from past pain—perhaps by rehearsing hurts, self-condemnation, or lies? Choose one life-giving declaration from God’s Word (e.g., “I am a new creation in Christ” – 2 Corinthians 5:17) to speak aloud daily. How might consistent use of life-giving speech begin to rewire your mind?

5. Walking in the Spirit’s Victory

Galatians 5:16 urges us to “walk by the Spirit” so we will not gratify the flesh. Looking at the works of the flesh (vv. 19-21) versus the fruit of the Spirit (vv. 22-23), which fruit (love, joy, peace, patience, etc.) do you most need to overcome a specific stronghold from your past? Ask the Holy Spirit to produce that fruit in you today. What one action can you take to “keep in step” with Him rather than old habits?

6. Confidence in Divine Weapons

2 Corinthians 10:4 reminds us that our weapons have “divine power to demolish strongholds.” Considering your past traumas or recurring negative thoughts, where have you felt powerless to change? How does knowing that God equips us with supernatural tools (Scripture, prayer, faith) build your confidence that these strongholds can be destroyed? Thank God for His power and claim one promise from His Word over that area.

7. Moving Forward in Transformation

Combining Romans 12:2 and Galatians 5:22-23, envision your mind fully renewed—producing the fruit of the Spirit instead of old junk. How would your relationships, decisions, and daily life change if past strongholds were demolished and replaced with Christ’s mind? Surrender one specific area of pain to Jesus right now, asking Him to transform it into purpose. End with praise for the abundant life He promises (John 10:10).